

## **SHIBA HELPLINE NEWS FLASHES!**

**April 18, 2006**

Newsletter published by the SHIBA HelpLine Regional Managers, for time-sensitive health insurance news. Please pass the information on to others!

**NOTE:** We will send you future *News Flashes* issues via the News Flash listserv. Even though we are changing the method to send you *News Flashes*, you will still receive them by e-mail. If you know of others that want to join the listserv, they can [sign up online](http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=shibanewsflash&A=1).  
(<http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=shibanewsflash&A=1>)

### ***The latest headlines:***

**New Washington state law creates an anti-fraud unit at Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC):** Organized insurance fraud costs Washington's insurance industry \$400 million annually, which law-abiding insurance policyholders ultimately pay. The new unit will investigate and work with law enforcement to prosecute insurance fraud.

**Medicare computer system signs clients up twice for Part D:** Due to a computer glitch, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) signed up approximately 500,000 Medicaid clients twice, with separate plans. To correct the problem, CMS is requiring plans to contact clients who have not used their coverage, to confirm they are enrolled in the right plan. Plans must provide the correct enrollment information to CMS by April 15.

**Changes to the Alien Emergency Medical (AEM) Program:** As of January 1, 2006, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) restricted AEM coverage to clients who qualify for emergency-related medical services only. Certain categories of service now require prior authorization, and are subject to specific criteria for coverage. If an AEM client has questions about their coverage, please refer them to their local DSHS Community Service Office or DSHS at 1-800-562-3200.

**Group Health Cooperative (GHC) lifts capacity waiver:** Effective January 1, 2006, GHC lifted their capacity waiver for Skagit and Whatcom counties on Medicare Advantage products. This means that GHC's managed care plan is now open in these two counties and clients can purchase Medicare Advantage products without a wait.

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